To the Secretaries-General
Of the National Commissions for UNESCO

Ref.: ERI/MSP/ENA/15/4

19 February 2015

Sir/Madam,

I attended recently the Constituent Meeting of the newly created Network of European National Commissions in Bonn, Germany, in which thirty National Commissions of EU-Member States, Candidate-EU-Countries, and EFTA-Countries participated. This initiative is very much in line with the Recommendations of the Action Plan for Enhancing Cooperation of the UNESCO Secretariat with National Commissions for UNESCO, which encourages initiatives of networking, partnership and cooperation among National Commissions, and I warmly welcome this initiative as well as others of a similar type.

In the upcoming progress report on the implementation of the Action Plan that will be issued ahead of the next Executive Board, we will point out other successful examples of regional or sub-regional networks such as the Central African network and the East African National Commissions’ network, or the network of Pacific National Commissions.

8-22 April 2015 – 196th session of the Executive Board

The 196th session of the Executive Board will be taking place from 8 to 22 April 2015 at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris. For more information on the Executive Board, please follow this link: http://www.unesco.org/new/en/executive-board/

As customary, the traditional meeting of National Commissions for UNESCO will be convened on the margins of the Executive Board on 15 and 16 April, from 8h to 10h.

I would also like to inform you that the second Interregional Meeting of the National Commissions will most likely take place on the 2nd of November, the day prior to the opening of the 38th session of the General Conference. So, please kindly mark your calendar accordingly.

**Enhanced methodology to measure the national value of UNESCO:**

Following seminars at various Inter-regional meetings of National Commissions, many colleagues expressed an interest in learning more about methodologies to measure the national value of UNESCO. The UK National Commission has further developed its methodology, as set-out in an outline presented by Professor Fernandes in Astana.
If you would like to exchange ideas and learn more about this methodology please email James Bridge (jbridge@unesco.org.uk). Depending on your feedback, we may set up a specific session to exchange ideas on this topic in the margins of UNESCO's April Executive Board meeting.

**27 February 2015 – Extension of the deadline for submitting nominations to the 2015 UNESCO/Juan Bosch Prize for the Promotion of Social Science Research in Latin America and the Caribbean**

The new deadline for the submission of candidates for the UNESCO/Juan Bosch Prize for the Promotion of Social Science Research 2015 has been extended to 27 February 2015 at midnight (Paris time).

I wish to remind you that the purpose of the Prize is to reward, every two years, the best social science thesis, written by a young researcher in the Latin American and Caribbean region, which has made a significant contribution to the promotion of research, in the social sciences, that endeavours to improve social development.

The Prize was instituted by the Executive Board in 2009 at the initiative of the Government of the Dominican Republic. In creating this Prize, the Member States on the Executive Board recognized the remarkable contribution of Professor Juan Bosch to the study of social and political processes in the Dominican Republic and the Caribbean region.


Contact: Mr Germán Solinís (premio.juan.bosch@unesco.org)

**21 March 2015 - World Water Day**

Each year, World Water Day highlights a specific aspect of freshwater. For 2015, the theme 'Water and Sustainable Development' is an important opportunity to consolidate and build upon the previous World Water Days and highlight water's role in the sustainable development agenda.

This year, the official celebration will be marked by the launching of the 2015 edition of the United Nations World Water Development Report (WWDR) entitled 'Water for a Sustainable World', taking place the day before, on 20 March in New Delhi (India) and organized by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The WWDR - prepared in close collaboration with the 31 members and 35 partners that make up UN-Water - is produced by the World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP), which is hosted and led by UNESCO, and presents a review of the world’s water resources.

The success of this Day's celebrations is dependent upon the involvement and the commitment of a broad number of stakeholders, including National Commissions. Therefore, I hope that many of you will foresee the organization of activities that would contribute to the achievement of the goals of this Day.

You will find more information on the Day following [this link](http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/events/prizes-and-celebrations/unesco-prizes/juan-bosch-prize/). I encourage you to promote this International Day in your countries.

Contact: Ms Simona Gallese (s.gallese@unesco.org).
6 April 2015 - 2nd International Day of Sport for Development and Peace

In 2013, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 6 April as the International Day of Sports and Physical Activity, to celebrate the contribution of sports and physical activity to education, human development, healthy lifestyles and a peaceful world. The 2nd International Day of Sport for Development and Peace will be celebrated on 6 April 2015.

UNESCO’s Executive Board, by its 192 EX/Decision 38, had already welcomed and endorsed the recommendation of the Declaration of the UN’s third International Forum on Sport for Peace and Development to proclaim an “International Day of Sports and Physical Activity” and further invited the Director-General to support all efforts leading the UN General Assembly to proclaim this Day.

The choice of the date of 6 April can be explained by the fact that, in 2002, at its 55th session, the Assembly of the World Health Organization, in its resolution WHA 55.23, urged Member States to celebrate a “Move for Health Day” each year to promote physical activity as essential for health and well-being. The date 6 April has been used since the year 2003 by some civil society organizations for celebrating a “World Day for Physical Activity”.

I suggest that National Commissions take advantage of this international day to stimulate interest and directly involve youth in activities related to sports and physical activity.

Further information can be found in the following links:

UNESCO's Programme on Sport and Anti-Doping
UN Assembly Proclaims 6 April International Day of Sport for Development and Peace
UNESCO's Executive Board - 192 EX/Decision 38

Contact: Mr Philipp Muller-Wirth (p.muller-wirth@unesco.org)


On 9 April 2015, the 2015 EFA Global Monitoring Report will be launched, both online and in events in Paris, New Delhi and New York. The 2015 Report titled ‘Education for All 2000-2015: achievements and challenges’ is the 12th and final report of the current series. The Report will provide an authoritative account of country progress and of commitments undertaken by the international community, based on up to date statistical evidence, in-depth policy analysis and informative case studies.

Analyzing each EFA goal in turn, the Report will highlight policies and practices that have helped or hindered national progress. It will also carefully consider the influence of domestic financing trends and international aid flows. Drawing upon lessons from previous reports the 2015 GMR will provide clear recommendations to help global, regional and national policy leaders better define and monitor the post-2015 education goal and targets.

I invite the National Commissions to sign up online to receive the new report. The concept note and the extended outline in English | French | Spanish can be downloaded here.

Contact: Ms Leila Loupis (l.loupis@unesco.org)

As announced by the Director-General's Circular Letter, the fourth edition of International Jazz Day will take place in Paris, on 30 April. As you know, this International Day celebrates the art of jazz, and highlights the important role jazz music plays in encouraging dialogue among culture and civilizations, eradicating discrimination and promoting human dignity. The first edition of the Day took place in April 2012. Further information on the 2012, 2013 and 2014 editions of the Day are available at www.unesco.org/new/en/jazz-day.

To build on the achievements of the past and broaden the geographical scope, diversity and impact of the 2015 edition of International Jazz Day, we count on your support and contribution for the success of the 2015 celebration, by raising awareness, for example, in your local associated schools and universities on this day, as well as by developing programmes /events involving public and private partners.

Contact: outreach@jazzday.com

UNESCO Publications

- **Quality Physical Education** is a new interactive online publication developed by UNESCO in partnership with the European Commission, the International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education (ICSSPE), International Olympic Committee (IOC), UNDP, UNICEF, UNOSDP and WHO. These guidelines aim at informing the provision of quality physical education across the full age range from early years through secondary education. They provide a framework to support policymakers (i.e. heads of department or senior officials within ministries) in reshaping physical education policy to accelerate the development of several dimensions of human capital in a unique, comprehensive way. You can download it [under this link](http://www.unesco.org/jazzday).

- The publication **The International Status of Education about the Holocaust** is available in English under [this link](http://www.unesco.org/jazzday). This study, carried out by UNESCO and the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research, compares for the first time representations of the Holocaust in school textbooks and national curricula. The book highlights evolving practices worldwide and thus provides education stakeholders with comprehensive documentation about current trends in curricula directives and textbook representations of the Holocaust.

- **Fixing the Broken Promise of Education for All**, published by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics and UNICEF, presents the latest statistical evidence from administrative records and household surveys to better identify children who are out of school and the reasons for their exclusion from education. Based on a series of national and regional studies and policy analysis by leading experts, the report explains why better data and cross-sector collaboration are fundamental to the design of effective interventions to overcome the barriers facing out-of-school children and adolescents.


NEW !!! – National Commissions’ Community Board – Sharing Initiatives

In addition to continually updating the National Commissions' website with news of your activities and events, announcements can be posted on the community board of the Monthly Letter.
On 19 January, the Sint Maarten National Commission for UNESCO launched its website: http://www.unesco.sx

The Canadian Commission has launched its e-newsletter in English and French, which has been uploaded on UNESCO.INT.

Appointments of Presidents and Secretaries-General of National Commissions (January 2015):

I am pleased to welcome to the National Commissions network the following new members:

In Burkina Faso, Mr Filiga Michel Sawadogo has been appointed President and Mr Sanmalmin Aristide Dabire has been appointed Secretary-General (since August 2014).

In El Salvador, Mr Francisco Humberto Castaneda has been appointed Secretary-General (October 2014).

In Finland, Ms Jutta Urpilainen has been appointed Chairperson, succeeding Mr Tapio Markkanen.

In Iceland, Mr Gunnar Haraldsson has been appointed Chairperson and Ms Aslaug Dora Eyjolfsdottir has been appointed Secretary-General.

In Jordan, Mr Suheil Shaheen has been appointed Secretary-General succeeding Mrs Intissare Al-ghewi.

In Ukraine, Mr Serguiy Kyslytsya has been appointed President.

In Zambia, Ms Nondo Chilonga has been appointed Secretary-General succeeding Ms Brenda Muntemba.

In Sint Maarten, Mrs Rita Bourne-Gumbs has been appointed Chairperson.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

Eric Falt